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whole plan of the poem and its *raison d'être*, and acquaint him with the causes underlying the historical and literary events of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and thus explain the sources from which the poet drew his first nourishment. The work begins with the tradition of letters in Italy to the Latin decadence; it traces with sympathetic and characteristic logic the whole of the poet's life and sufferings. The story of this austere life, all intelligence and feeling, no one could have written with such robust appreciation but a kindred spirit. The interest never flags. Among the more engrossing chapters may be pointed out, in Part II, Chapter II, "Evil," Chapter III, "Evil and Good in Conjunction and in Conflict," Chapter IV, "Good"; in Part III, Chapter V, "The Orthodoxy of Dante"; in Part IV, Chapter II, "Beatrice, Influence of Women in Christian Society"; in the documentary section, Chapter IV, "Man," Chapter V, "Society, Philosophy of the Law." Last but not least of the merits of this work is the diction, clear, concise, chaste, free alike from flowery ostentation and foggy ambiguity. The Church of France has always had an eye on the rhetoric of its nurslings; they are taken through the Humanities, and if they do not always come out wholly sound in point of logic, they do, generally speaking, in point of good grammar and composition.

In regard to the translation of this good piece of work, we can only call it admirable, both in respect to fidelity to the text and excellence of expression. The original has lost nothing by its transference into another language.

C. R. CORSON.

Le réalisme métaphysique. Par ÉMILE THOUVAREZ. Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine. Paris, Alcan, 1894. — pp. 282.

Metaphysical Realism is identified by the author of this work with metaphysical Rationalism. His aim is to show, as over against Scepticism, Positivism, and Criticism, "the absolute preponderance of reason over every other element in the world; that reason is . . . the absolute principle which, independently existing, gives to spirits and things their manner of being and their being" (p. 10). Arranging the rational factors of experience in a synthetic order, he contends that each lower principle presupposes and finds its complement in the higher, and that the latter determines more profoundly the nature of the reality implied in the lower. Thus he discusses, with special reference to Scepticism, the principles of abstract thought — identity and sufficient reason, analytic and synthetic judgments, and the various kinds of inference; with special reference to Positivism, the forms of sensibility — number, space, time, and quantity; with special reference to Criticism, the categories of the understanding — substance, cause, end, duty, and the principles of aesthetic judgment; finally, the existence and idea of God as the highest category in the system of Realism. The 'dogmatic' conclusion of the whole matter is "belief in the unity of all [rational] principles, in the harmony of world and spirit, in the regularity and constancy of all rational laws, in their existence in God, their guarantee and

governor" (p. 276). The peculiarity of the author's standpoint is that he makes the choice between this doctrine and the competing hypotheses rest ultimately on a judgment of worth. "Aesthetics is the final criterion of things" (p. 65). "All philosophies are engaged in a struggle for existence, and it is natural and rational to think that the most beautiful and harmonious, the one most intrinsically perfect, should triumph" (p. 9). Faith marks both the beginning and the end of reason. "Reason cannot transcend faith, because it presupposes at the start certain undemonstrated principles" (p. 56). And "when we reach the highest point of rational development, and all human certainty falters or disappears, it is by an act of belief that we are able to essay the final synthesis which connects the real with the ideal" (p. 65). We believe in the reality of God because we believe in the reality of the ideas of which God is the necessary postulate. But the conception of God is a paradox. "The problem is to define a God which one could not blaspheme, even at the death-bed of one's relatives, carried off by a brutal fatality; and all analogies of reason are here insufficient and impotent; there seems to be no alternative between despair and faith" (p. 264). The faith of the author seems to be that it is always best to believe the best. The book contains much that is suggestive. It is an interesting and sincere attempt to rehabilitate dogmatic metaphysics by employing the method of Hegel to correct Kant, and the spirit of Kant's moral faith to qualify the dogmatism of metaphysics. H. N. GARDINER.

Karl Ernst von Baer und seine Weltanschauung. Von DR. REMIGIUS STÖLZLE, Professor der Philosophie an der Universität Würzburg. Regensburg, Nationale Verlagsanstalt, 1897. — pp. xi, 687.

Karl Ernst von Baer (1792–1876), eminent for his contributions to natural science, geography, anthropology, and ethnography, was also interested in philosophical, and particularly in metaphysical, questions. The author of the present work has sketched a complete outline of Baer's philosophy from the materials contained in his numerous works (over 260 in number), his correspondence, and the manuscripts communicated by his grandson, Herr von Lingen, in St. Petersburg. The book falls into five parts. The first division deals with the sources of Baer's philosophy, his relation to philosophy, and his epistemology. The second gives his philosophy of nature, under the following heads: (1) explanation of nature or purpose in nature, (2) aphorisms dealing with the cosmological problem, (3) the origin and development of life and species, (4) the principle of life and the forms of organization, (5) Baer's relation to the theory of evolution, (6) his opposition to Darwin, (7) the soul of animals, (8) the place of man in nature, (9) the soul of man, its existence, nature, origin, and future, (10) the origin of man, (11) unity of mankind, (12) antiquity of the human race. The third part contains Baer's philosophy of religion. The chapter on the Being and Concept of God, distinguishes three stages in his conception of